

Canadian Flag

Mr. MacLean (Queens): I was rising on a small question of privilege. Had I known I was going to get so much applause I might not have done so. I hope I did not understand the Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) correctly because he left the implication, to me at any rate, that certain groups in this house had a monopoly of loyalty to Canada or to this country.

Mr. Pearson: No one, Mr. Speaker, could take that interpretation from what I said; and nothing in what I said bore that interpretation or implication. On the other hand, if I wished to be sensitive I could say that no one on the other side of the house has a monopoly on loyalty for the things for which we stood in the past and for the people from whom we have descended. My hon. friend will remember that when I began this part of my speech I said that there were people in this house who violently object to the stand we are taking, and I said that I respect their objection. They are as good Canadians as I could ever hope to be.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that the flag we are submitting in this resolution results not only from our growth but from our diversity, the achievement of peoples with pasts in other countries; but they are now concerned, as we are all concerned, with one future only, and that is the future of Canada. We are all concerned with Canada's future in a world at peace, in freedom and security. So this flag, if it is adopted by this parliament, will stand for one Canada; united, strong, independent and equal to her tasks.

Mr. Nowlan: What about the union jack? Are we to adopt that too?

Mr. Pearson: Mr. Speaker, I will be delighted to talk about the union jack, but when I mentioned it this afternoon I was howled down by my hon. friends opposite.

Mr. Nowlan: Mr. Speaker, on a question of privilege. The right hon. Prime Minister was not howled down. He began to read a prepared speech on the subject; and then whether or not he anticipated your ruling he apparently overlooked it. Then when he got in a mess he said he was howled down by the opposition. We were simply trying to make him conform with your ruling, and I would suggest that the Prime Minister does that in the future.

Mr. Pearson: I do not understand my hon. friend's interjection. When I began my speech this afternoon I read the resolution, and the last part of the resolution included that part

which dealt with the union jack as the symbol of the commonwealth and the monarchy. Then before I could read the words that follow, the right hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Diefenbaker) got up and stopped me.

Mr. Nowlan: Mr. Speaker, all I am doing is to ask the Prime Minister this. He is talking about the flag of Canada which is going to denote national unity. Is he taking the union jack which Joey Smallwood forced upon him, or is he going to take the other one?

Mr. Pearson: Mr. Speaker, if I answered that question you would rule me out of order, of course. However, I hope to answer it in due course when we discuss this part of the resolution separately, when I hope to satisfy my hon. friend's legitimate curiosity.

As I was saying when this interruption occurred, Mr. Speaker, this flag in the resolution, if it is adopted by parliament, will symbolize a Canada united, strong, independent and equal to her tasks. It will recognize that we cannot be saved or sanctified merely by the valour and devotion of our ancestors. It remains to us in each new generation to do our own duty in changing conditions. Our willingness to do that duty means adaptation and change. It means sacrifice; it means work; it means endurance. And how we meet this challenge in the future under what I hope will be a distinctive Canadian national flag will determine the destiny of our country.

In these restless, soul-searching days about which Right Hon. Vincent Massey spoke in Charlottetown last week we are being asked particularly to give to the hearts and minds of our children a feeling of national identity, national pride, national loyalty. We are asked to provide for them a symbol of our independent strength and of the bright promise of a future for them. We are asked to help them to be more conscious of our country and more proud of Canadian citizenship. Mr. Speaker, I believe that a distinctive maple leaf Canadian flag will help them in their search of this objective. I believe that it will stimulate them as they would be stimulated by the inspiring words of one of the great founders of confederation, D'Arcy McGee, when he wrote on this subject:

All we have to do is, each for himself, to keep down dissensions which can only weaken, impoverish and keep back the country; each for himself to do all he can to increase its wealth, its strength and its reputation; each for himself...to welcome every talent, to hail every invention, to cherish every gem of art, to foster every gleam of authorship, to honour every acquirement and